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CHILDREN'S BOOK
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from his affectionate
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Robert Williams Junr.

September 7th
1826.





A Tribute of
REGARD,
PRESENTED BY
Thy Affectionate
Friend







Frontpiece.



The Farm Yard

A
VISIT
TO
A FARM HOUSE;
OR,
AN INTRODUCTION
TO
VARIOUS SUBJECTS
CONNECTED WITH
RURAL ECONOMY.

EMBELLISHED WITH BEAUTIFUL PLATES.

By S. W.

AUTHOR OF "A VISIT TO LONDON."

SEVENTH EDITION,
REVISED AND CORRECTED

By T. H.

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PREFACE.

THIS little Work was undertaken to excite the attention of those children, who live in the country, to the various objects by which they are surrounded; and to furnish those residing in the metropolis and other large cities, with some information relative to rural economy, which their situation prevents them acquiring by personal observation.

The author acknowledges that she is totally incompetent deeply to discuss the phenomena of nature, or the science of agriculture; she should indeed

think it inconsistent to introduce scientific researches into a Work of this kind. But a slight investigation of the simple arts by which the nourishment of man is effected, or of some of those wonders of creative power which daily present themselves to view, cannot, in her opinion, be deemed an improper exercise even at an early age.

VISITS
TO
A FARM HOUSE.

CHAPTER I.

Cows.

“WHAT a delightful morning!” exclaimed little Arthur Benson on opening his eyes, and seeing the sun shine bright into his room; “Charles, Charles,” continued he, turning to his brother, who was still asleep, “let us get up directly, and we shall have time for a little walk before grandpapa and grandmamma come down stairs.” Charles obeyed the summons, and

they were soon dressed. They then went into the garden, and from the garden into the field adjoining; both highly pleased with all they saw, for they had never slept out of London before, and the country was quite a new scene to them. "See," said Charles, "how all the cows are gathered together by that gate; and here comes a man they call old Ralph with a pail on his arm. Pray, Ralph, what do the cows want there?" "They want to be milked," said Ralph, "and through that gate is the way to the farm yard." "Are *you* going to milk them, and may we come with you?" inquired Arthur.

Leave being given, they tripped along by the side of the good old ser-

vant; but both stood at some distance behind when they came near the cows, as they felt rather afraid of going close to such large animals. "Why, now, masters, what is there to be afraid of?" said Ralph, who found they had left off talking and suddenly shrunk back. "The cows will not hurt you, if you do not hurt them." "Don't they sometimes toss people with their great horns?" asked Charles. "Here and there you may meet with a vicious one," replied the man, "but in common they are very gentle."

Arthur. I remember my papa told me never to run in the way of the cows that we meet in London streets.

Ralph. Aye, that is a very different thing. The poor cattle are not used

to be there, so sometimes they may be frightened; and then, the butchers are often cruel, and will beat and drive them about, as I have heard, so that for what I know it may be best to keep out of their way; but here there is nothing of the sort. I do not ill use them, and they are always quiet with me.

The little Bensons then recovered from their fears, and wanted to milk the cows themselves. The trial was made, and they were surprised to find that they were not able to do it as well as Ralph. Had they been older, they would have known that there are many things which are easy to those who are accustomed to do them, that one who had never tried would find difficult.

“Pray, Ralph,” asked Arthur, “why has the young calf that thing full of spikes round his mouth? See, he wants to suck the black cow, and she will not let him. Cannot you take it off?”

“Oh no, master Arthur, it is time the calf should be weaned. He is old enough now to eat grass, and we want the milk for the dairy; so we put the spikes on him, and because of them, as they would hurt her, the mother will not let him suck any more.”

“Is he to be killed?” inquired Charles.

“Not at present,” replied the old man. “Master means to keep him to draw in the team.”

“To draw in the team!” said Charles with some surprise.

“Yes,” returned Ralph; “we have always a team of oxen. You may see them ploughing in that field yonder; just there,” continued he, pointing with his finger, “beyond the holly hedge.”

“I see them; I see them,” said Arthur. “Poor creatures! how slow they go! Are not they tired, Ralph?” “No, sir,” replied Ralph, “they do not move so quick as horses; but they are vastly stronger. And though it is not always quite so easy to manage them, yet on the whole they answer very well.”

Ralph had now finished milking: and taking the little boys into the stable, he showed them a baby calf, as he called it, that was to be sold to the butcher the next day.



The Baby Calf

London Published by W. Darton Jan Oct 5. 1825.



“O you pretty little thing!” said Arthur. “Only look, Charles, at these spots on its back. I should like to have it for my own. Why must it be killed, pray?”

Ralph. To serve us for food, master Arthur. If we were to suffer all the cattle to live, they would eat all the grass and corn that we could grow; and then we should be starved, and you would not like that.

Arthur. No, I don't want to starve; only I do not like to have things killed.

At this moment Mr. Mansfield came into the stable.

“We were talking about this poor calf, grandpapa,” said Charles. “Ralph says it is to be killed to-morrow to

make veal. I am sorry for it; it has such a pretty coat!"

"It cannot be helped, my dear," replied his grandfather. "But when it is dead, do you know what will be done with its pretty coat?" The boys answering they did not, "It will be sold," said he, "to the tanner, who dresses the skins of cattle, or *hides* as they are called; and when it is properly prepared, it makes that beautiful, smooth kind of leather, that the large books you were looking at last night were bound with. It is often prepared to write upon, and is then called vellum. The skins of oxen and cows make a thick coarse leather, such as the soles of our boots and shoes."

“And what becomes of the hair?” asked Charles.

“After the hide has been soaked for a long time,” replied Mr. Mansfield, “it comes off easily, and is put into that kind of mortar which is used to plaster walls, in order to keep them from crumbling and falling away. Did you never see in a white wall broken down in part, a heap of short hairs, and here and there perhaps a little loose piece of mortar hanging to them?”

Arthur said he had, but he did not know it was cow-hair; and added, he could not have thought it could have been of any use.

“Every thing is of use, my dear,” said Mr. Mansfield. “I doubt if you

can name a part of the cow that will not turn to some account."

"What the hoofs, grandpapa?" said Charles.

"Yes, Charles," returned Mr. Mansfield. "The hoofs and the parings of the skin, by being boiled down to a strong jelly, make the glue which carpenters use to join things together."

Arthur. The horns—Oh, I know what is done with the horns. I have seen horn lanterns, and I have got a little box at home that mamma says is made of horn,

Mr. Mansfield. Very well, Arthur. And you may have seen boxes, and knife-handles, and combs, and many other things, made of the bones of the ox. Even the dung is of some use.

It is a good manure for land ; it is used in the process for bleaching linen ; and poor women pick it up when it is dry, and make fires of it, to save coals.

CHAPTER II.

The Dairy.

MRS. MANSFIELD, hearing how much her little grandsons had been pleased with the cows, after breakfast took them into the dairy, to show them what was done with the milk which those useful animals give in such large quantities. The dairy was a little room with a brick floor, facing the north, and kept very cool, by means of a latticed window that let in fresh air. It was necessary that it should be built in that way, because heat

soon turns milk sour. Round the room were fixed a sort of trays lined with lead, which then were all filled with milk.

“Grandmamma, what is to be done with this milk?” inquired Arthur.

“It is set for cream,” answered Mrs. Mansfield; “and the cream will be made into butter.”

Charles. How is butter made, pray?

Grandmamma. Come here, and I will show you. The milk is poured into these trays, which are not deep, but broad, so as to cover a large space. When it has stood some time, the cream or greasy part, which at first is mixed with the milk, rises to the top in the manner you now see. Then it is skimmed off with this

ladle, and put into a pan by itself. This is done twice a-day; and when there is cream enough, it is churned into butter.

Charles. Is there any churn here, grandmamma? Sister Kate has got a plaything churn, but I never saw one fit for real use.

Mrs. Mansfield pointed to a large barrel fixed on a stand, with a winch handle to turn it, and told him that was the churn. Charles was surprised, and said it was not at all like his sister's.

Grandmamma. Perhaps not. Sometimes they are made like a pail, with a long stick to pull up and down; but these I have give less trouble, and, I believe, are now common.



The Dairy.

London, Published by W. Darton, Junr Dec 5. 1815.



Arthur. Well, grandmamma, how is this used?

Grandmamma. The cream is put in through that little square door, which is then shut quite close; and when the churn has been turned a good while, it is changed into butter.

Charles. So then butter is nothing but cream shaken about? I should like to see it made.

Grandmamma. You cannot see it now, my dear, because Rose churned yesterday. But I will give you a little cream in a phial: and you may shake it till you make it into butter.

Arthur. Oh, can *we* make it so? I should like it very much indeed, if you please, ma'am.

Mrs. Mansfield fetched a phial, and the two boys amused themselves a long time with their experiment. But they found that with all their pains they could not turn the whole into butter; their grandmamma told them there was always some waste; that it was called buttermilk, and given to the pigs.

Arthur and Charles, quite proud of their success, went to look for Rose, that they might tell her they could make butter as well as she. They found her in the dairy, where their attention was drawn to a new circumstance. Rose was standing before a large tub, full of a white substance rather thicker than jelly, which she was very diligently employed in breaking.

They forgot the butter they had intended to boast of, and both began to ask a variety of questions, which she answered with great good humour.

Both the Boys. What is that for? What are you doing now, Rose?

Rose. Making cheese.

Charles. Making cheese? We'll since I have been at my grandpapa's, I have seen things I never saw before.

Arthur. But how do you make it, Rose? What have you got there?

Rose. Curd.

Arthur. What is curd?

Rose. It is made from milk, master Arthur. When the cream is taken off, we take the milk and mix it with rennet, and then—

Arthur. Rennet! What is that?

Rose. A sour juice that is made by boiling a part of the inside of a calf. We put a little rennet to the milk, which makes it part into curds, and whey. This thick white part is the curd, and the thin watery part is called whey.

Arthur. Is that the whey people take for a cold?

Rose. No. That kind of whey is made with wine instead of rennet; but the curd parts just in the same manner as this.

Charles. I will ask our Sally to let me look at it the next time she makes whey. But why do you break it?

Rose. That there may be no lumps. Wait a little, if you please, and you shall see how I go on.

She then took a large round bag

made of coarse cloth, into which she put all the curd, and pressed it with very heavy weights in order to squeeze out as much of the whey as she could. This done, she turned it out of the bag into a vat which has holes like a cullender, and, leaving it to drain, then told them the cheese was finished.

“I did not know,” said Charles, “it was so easy to make cheese. But what is the rind, pray?”

“’Tis the same as the rest,” replied Rose; “only, being left to the air, it grows hard in time.” Then leading them into another room, she showed them a great number of cheeses; some were still soft, having been lately made; others, that had been longer kept, were grown quite hard.

“What is the whey good for?” asked Charles, as they came back through the dairy.

“We give it to the pigs,” said Rose.

“So then,” said Arthur to himself as he walked away, “*butter and cheese are both made from milk; but the butter is the greasy part, and the cheese is the curdy.*”

“Yes, master Arthur,” said Rose, “you are right, for that is our way of making butter and cheese in this country: but in many places, where richer cheese is made, they use the milk without skimming off the cream; and to make good cream cheese, the cream only is used when skimmed from the milk.”

CHAPTER III.

The Pigs.

WHEN dinner-time came, it happened that there were brought to table some custards and gooseberry tarts, of which Charles was tempted to eat very greedily. He had already been twice helped, and the servant was going to carry away the remainder of a tart that had been left in the dish, when Charles, not satisfied whilst any remained, stopped him, and once more filled his plate with it.

The footman stared ; and his grandpapa and grandmamma looked at him with surprise, but said nothing.

In the evening Mr. Mansfield led his grandsons into the yard, just at the time his man was giving the pigs their supper. Arthur and Charles were diverted at the eagerness with which the whole family squeaked and grunted over their food, which they devoured with the utmost haste, treading one over another as they scrambled for a share.

“O grandpapa,” exclaimed Charles, “how droll it is to see the pigs eat ! Look there ! look there ! One has got a cabbage leaf, and another wants it. Now it has got it away,

and it eats it as fast as ever it can. And now it is come for more. I dare say they will soon empty the trough."

"Perhaps so," replied his grand-papa, smiling. "Pigs are as fond of cabbage leaves and bean stalks, as little boys are of gooseberry pie."

Charles blushed.

"Hey, Charles!" continued he, putting his hand upon his head so as to look full in his face, "this is not the first time to-day I thought I had a pig for my companion. Do you know any body that ate voraciously, and at last *emptied the dish*?"

Charles softly answered, "Yes, sir."

"Well, I believe he is ashamed of his greediness," said Mr. Mansfield; "I only advise him another time to

be more upon his guard for fear we should take him for a pig."

As they were sauntering about, a sow with a fine litter of pigs at her heels came across the yard.

"Pray, sir," asked Arthur, "how many pigs may a sow have at once?"

"From ten to twenty," said Mr. Mansfield. "But as she has not milk enough to suckle so many, she casts off some, and seldom brings up more than twelve."

Arthur. What food do they like best, sir?

Grandpapa. They are not very difficult. They will eat almost any kind of rubbish and offal: but vegetables of all sorts are best for them. Cabbage stalks, potatoe parings, bean



The Pigs.

London, Published by W. Darton, Junr. Oct. 5. 1835.



and pea shells, they like very well ; and it is a good way to turn them out into the forests, where they meet with plenty of acorns, and mast nuts that grow upon beach trees. With their long snouts they turn up the ground, that they may get at the roots, or plants : to prevent this, we are obliged to have a ring thrust through their noses, otherwise they would do a great deal of mischief.

Charles. Are they of much use, grandpapa ?

Grandpapa. Not whilst they are alive. When dead, the flesh, you know, is eaten, and is called pork, or bacon if salted in a particular manner. The lard, or some of the fat, is used in making many sorts of plasters, and

the bristles are formed into brushes of various kinds; and are used by shoemakers and others in sewing leather, instead of needles.

Arthur. I like *little pigs* much better than I do great old ones.

Grandpapa. I cannot say the hog is a favourite animal with me. He is not only ugly, but his habits of life are disagreeable. You may have observed that he is very fond of grouting in the mire. Neither his grunting nor his squeaking is pleasant music; and the whole race are so greedy, that, if they have food enough, they will eat till they are too heavy to stand on their legs; even then they will lie on their sides, and eat still. Sometimes the sow will go so far as to devour her own young.

Arthur. Indeed? The unnatural brute!

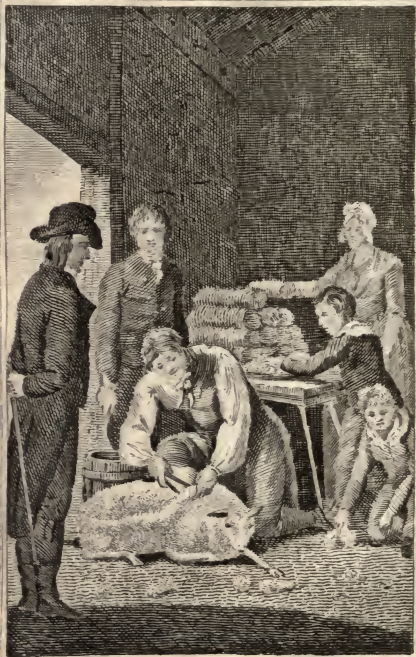
Grandpapa. I should have told you that their stomach is made very large, and requires an unusual quantity of food. But if we are disgusted with the manners of a hog, we should be careful not to imitate them; as filth, gluttony, and want of natural affection, must surely be ten times more shocking in the creature man, who is blessed with reason.

CHAPTER IV.

Sheep-Shearing.

THE following day being appointed for sheep-shearing, a number of men and boys assembled at an early hour in the great barn. Arthur and Charles went with their grandpapa to see the process, and were greatly pleased with the hurry and bustle of the scene. The sheep were penned in a fold close to the barn, and were fetched away by the lads one by one, as fast as the shearers were ready for them. A few





Sheep Shearing

days before, they had all been washed at a mill-pond, so that their fleeces were beautifully white, and they were so thick as to make the animals appear almost twice as large as they really were.

Arthur observed with surprise, that the poor creatures were perfectly quiet during the time of their being shorn ; although they struggled with terror when they were first brought out, and bleated piteously as soon as they were set at liberty.

He wondered at the ease with which the men laid them on the ground, and afterwards turned them over from side to side, as was necessary in the course of the shearing. After watching one of the shearers for some time, he be-

gan the following conversation with him :—

Arthur. Good man, does not it hurt the sheep to be pulled about in that way?

The Man. They do not like it; but I try to hurt them as little as I can.

Arthur. Are you not afraid of cutting them with the shears, when you put them down into the middle of the wool?

The Man. We take care to feel our way, but now and then they get an unlucky snip. That man there, that stands by the door, has some tar that he puts to them if they chance to be hurt.

Arthur. Poor things! how cold

they must feel when they lose such a quantity of wool!

The Man. It is time they should be shorn now, master. This is their winter coat, as one may say; and if it was left much longer, by little and little it would fall off of itself.

Arthur. Then why don't you let it come off of itself, instead of taking all this trouble, and teasing the sheep?

The Man. My service to you, sir! What, are we to lose the wool, or to follow the sheep from place to place wherever they choose to stray, in order to gather it after them? No, no; they may suffer a little at first, but if the weather is warm they soon get over it.

Arthur. How many can you shear in a day, good man?

The Man. Why, fifty, more or less. The quickest hands can finish one in ten minutes.

Charles during this time was helping a little girl to pick up the loose locks of wool that were scattered over the floor. His brother turned round, and saw how he was employed. What should *he* do? Every one was busy besides himself, and he could not bear to be the only idle person. A message came to fetch away one of the women, whose task it was to roll up the fleeces and pile them together on a heap. Arthur offered to take her place; and, after a few trials, he learned to tie them up very dexterously. He

continued at this employment for some time, and rejoiced to find himself of some use.

Mr. Mansfield at length called the two boys to go away. They immediately obeyed; and Charles, taking hold of his grandpapa's hand, asked him if he did not think a sheep-shearing was a most charming thing.

Grandpapa. It does very well in its season, my dear boy. Wool is so useful, that the shearing-time always gives me pleasure.

Arthur. What shall you do with it, grandpapa?

Grandpapa. I shall sell it to the wool-stapler; and, after it has passed through the hands of different manufacturers, you may perhaps meet with

it again in some shop, though so altered as not to be known for the same. It will then be in the shape of flannel, worsted, cloth, or perhaps some kind of stuff.

“That is all very droll,” said Charles. “But when will there be another sheep-shearing, grandpapa?”

“Not till this day twelvemonth, my dear,” returned Mr. Mansfield. “Wool does not grow very fast. In two or three weeks you will see the sheep covered with a little short wool; and the traces of the shears will then be worn away. As winter comes on, it grows thicker and longer; but that is not a time to rob them of their fleece. At last the year will come round, and then they will be again ready for the shearer.”

“ I am fond of sheep,” said Arthur ;
“ and I like little lambs, they look so
innocent.”

Grandpapa. They are gentle, timid creatures, and require the care of man more than almost any other animal ; as they have neither strength to defend themselves when attacked by their enemies, nor swiftness to run from danger.

Arthur. And they pay us for the care we take of them, by letting us have their wool ?

Grandpapa. Indeed they do, Arthur ; but not by their wool alone, for they are useful in more ways than one. Mutton, which you know is the flesh of the sheep, is one of the most wholesome meats we have ; some parts of

the fat are melted down to make tallow. The skin is sometimes made into parchment, and sometimes into leather, for gloves, shoes, and other things: and parts of the guts are twisted into strings for musical instruments.

Charles. What enemies have sheep, grandpapa? You have said they can't defend themselves against their enemies.

Grandpapa. Wherever there are wild beasts, Charles, they have many enemies, as they all prey upon the sheep. Eagles will attack young lambs; so will foxes; and even dogs, if they are fierce, and not properly trained.

Arthur. But I have often seen a dog along with a flock of sheep.

Grandpapa. Yes; the breed that is called the shepherd's dog is very use-

ful in managing them. They seldom bite, but will fetch those back that have gone astray ; and by barking at them alone, guide the whole flock much more easily than a man can do. When they have done their business, you may see them come back to the shepherd, and follow him as quietly as possible.

In the evening a supper was provided to refresh the shearers after their hard day's work, consisting of legs of mutton, and plum-puddings, with plenty of good ale. All was jollity and mirth. During the day a constant buz of many voices might have been heard even at some distance from the barn ; but the business they were engaged in did not allow time for much talk. At

night, on the contrary, they had nothing to do but to divert themselves, and every tongue was heard. They told merry stories without end, sang songs, and drank to the health of their kind master. Mr. Mansfield himself staid with them for some time, encouraging them to be cheerful, and walked about to see that every body was helped. At length, he left the party, followed by his grand-children, who immediately retired to rest, highly satisfied with the pleasures of the day.

CHAPTER V.

*A Walk through the Fields.*

THE next morning, Mr. Mansfield asked the little boys if they were disposed for a walk. Arthur replied that he should like it very much; but Charles said he would rather stay at home with his grandmamina; accordingly they set off without him.

“What pretty purple flowers grow in that field!” observed Arthur, when they had proceeded a little way. “Pray, grandpapa, what are they?”

“That is a field of clover,” replied Mr. Mansfield ; “and it will soon be cut for hay.”

Arthur. I never saw such pretty hay as that.

Grandpapa. Oh, there will be no beauty in it. On the contrary, it looks much coarser and browner than what is made of common grass, which is called meadow hay.

Arthur. What becomes of the flowers then?

Grandpapa. They dry and wither away. You do not suppose they would live when cut down. Did you ever see how hay is made?

Arthur. Yes, a great many times. A number of men and women go into a field and turn the grass, and then

they put it into cocks, and afterwards make a stack of it.

Grandpapa. Why do they do all that?

Arthur. To make it into hay.

Grandpapa. Yes. But why does turning it about make grass into hay?

Arthur said he did not know.

Grandpapa. Then I will tell you. The grass when cut down is full of moisture. If you squeeze a blade in your fingers, it will be damp; and that dampness is called sap. Now, while the sap is in it the grass will not keep. If you were to make it into a stack, it would soon rot, and smell so putrid you would not like to go near it. But when it is turned about to the sun and the wind, till the sap is dried away,

there is no more danger, and you may stack it, and keep it for a long time.

Arthur. But if I had a field, grandpapa, I would never make hay. My horses should go in and eat the grass when they wanted it; and I would save myself the trouble of working for them.

Grandpapa. I am afraid, Arthur, you would make a lazy farmer. Do not you know that nothing in this world is to be had without trouble? and if you are so very sparing of your pains, I fear you will not succeed very well.

Arthur. Why not, pray, sir?

Grandpapa. Did you ever take notice of the grass in the winter?

Arthur. Yes; I believe it is then short and black.

Grandpapa. The blackness is nothing but the earth among it; it is very thin at that time of the year. Did you ever observe a field just before it was cut for hay?

Arthur. Oh, yes. Do you know, grandpapa, we all took a walk in a field a little while ago; and the grass was so very long that it came up to the top of my legs; and little Kate cried, and could not get on at all.

Grandpapa. You see then, that as there is much grass in summer and but little in winter, your horses at one time would have more than they could eat, and at another would starve. Yet this would be owing to your own fault:

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for God gives enough for the whole year ; and all he requires of us is, that we should in the season of plenty lay up for the time of need.

CHAPTER VI.

*The Walk continued.*

THE next field they came to was sown with rye, which Mr. Mansfield said was a species of corn; and, although much coarser than wheat, was frequently made into bread, and in many places formed the chief food of the poor. He desired his grandson to gather an ear or two, that he might learn to distinguish between that and barley, which grew in the field through which they were next to pass.

Arthur pulled up a root of rye, and

then ran to overtake his grandfather, who by this time had got over the stile, and was slowly crossing the barley field.

“ Well, Arthur, what difference do you find in the growth of these two kinds of corn ? ” asked Mr. Mansfield.

Arthur. Indeed, grandpapa, I don’t see any, except that the rye grows very high, as high as the top of your hat, and that the barley only comes to my elbow.

Mr. Mansfield. That is one difference, to be sure. Examine them well, and perhaps you may discover some other.

Arthur. Oh, yes, I see, sir. The spikes of the rye are neither so fine nor so long as in the barley.

Mr. Mansfield. Very true again. So you see you need never mistake between them. The straw of the rye is the longest, but the beard (you should not call it the spikes) is shorter and coarser.

Arthur. I think the long beard of the barley gives it rather a silky look, as it waves about with the wind. Pray, grandpapa, is barley sown to make bread too?

Mr. Mansfield. Sometimes it is used for that purpose; but the greatest part of what we grow in England is for making beer.

Arthur. Beer! Is it possible that barley can make beer? Do you know, sir, how it is done?

Mr. Mansfield. Yes; and you shall

hear, if you wish to know. All grain is the seed of the plant; and before it can be put to any use it must be taken out of the ear. Now, to do that, it is thrashed with an instrument called a flail. I suppose you have seen one, have you not?

Arthur. I remember once passing at some distance from a barn, where a man was swinging something about, that looked like a bent stick; and he beat the ground with it, and somebody said he was thrashing.

Mr. Mansfield. That he certainly was. The corn was spread upon the barn-floor, and he was beating out the grain with a flail. The next business is to separate it from the chaff, or outside skin. This is sometimes

done by turning a machine very quickly so as to cause a wind, which blows away the chaff, for it is as light as a feather. A more simple method is, to throw the corn across from one side of the barn to the other, against the wind. The chaff, being so light, is soon blown back, whilst the corn goes on a little further, and falls in a heap by itself.

Arthur. But, dear grandpapa, what has this to do with making beer?

Mr. Mansfield. All in good time, my dear boy. You must *get at* the barley before you can *use* it, must you not? The method of winnowing I have described, relates principally to wheat (for barley is without chaff); but the barley must be thrashed, and

separated from the ear; after which it is put for some days into a cistern of water. It is then taken out and laid in heaps; when it ferments, and is ready to shoot out in the same manner as if sown in the ground. Afterwards it is spread thinly over a floor, and frequently turned; and when partly dry is carried to a kiln, a kind of oven, where it is dried. Having passed through all this process it is called malt, and the man whose business it is, is termed a maltster.

Arthur. I thought brewers made beer?

Mr. Mansfield. You were right. Brewers buy malt. They grind it, and then pour hot water upon it, to get out its strength and goodness. The

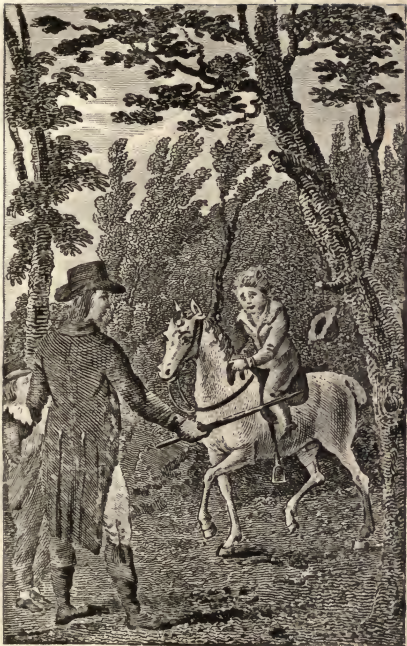
liquor thus obtained, which is sweet-wort, becomes the most valuable part of the commodity; for the malt has lost its virtue, and is called grains, and is only used to feed pigs and cattle. The wort is afterwards boiled with hops, which give it a bitterish taste instead of a sickly sweet, and keep it wholesome and good. Then it takes the name of beer; and after fermenting for a little while may be put into casks and kept for use. And now, Arthur, do you think that you understand brewing? Shall you recollect that malt is barley prepared in a particular way? and that beer is made by pouring warm water on the malt, and afterwards boiling it with hops?

Arthur. I think I shall, grandpapa.

CHAPTER VII.

The Pony.

As Mr. Mansfield and Arthur were returning from their walk, in a lane at a little distance from the house they were met by Charles, who had mounted a pony belonging to his grandfather: it had taken fright, and was running away at full speed. Mr. Mansfield stopped it by catching hold of the bridle; and as soon as he was satisfied that no mischief had happened, and Charles was sufficiently recovered to be able to talk, he inquired what had



Charles on the Pony.



led him to try his skill in horsemanship.

“Why, grandpapa,” replied Charles, “Robert had just come home with the pony, and left him at the gate; and I wanted to ride; so I got upon him, and he ran away with me.”

Mr. Mansfield. As you have never been used to ride, my dear Charles, you had better not get upon strange horses when you are alone. I wonder too that Plover should run away; he is in general very gentle.

Charles. At first he would keep his head over the gate, and I could not get him to move. So I hit him with a stick I had in my hand, and that set him off in a gallop.

Mr. Mansfield. I fancy all was

owing to your want of skill ; for Plover is a very quiet creature, and easily managed ; but he will not bear ill usage ; therefore, if you beat him much, I am not surprised at the accident.

Arthur. I am sure, grandpapa, Charles did not mean to be cruel, and use the horse ill.

Mr. Mansfield. He is so good a boy that I do not suspect him of it ; and I only meant to give him a caution against another time. No, my dear children, I hope you will never take pleasure in wanton cruelty. My heart has often ached at the barbarities I have seen practised on poor dumb creatures.

Arthur. Once when I was walking with papa, we saw a man beating

a horse about the head with the butt end of his whip, and my papa advised him not to do so ; but he said it was his own horse, and he had a right to do as he liked.

Mr. Mansfield. Nothing can give a man a right to be cruel. We may, it is true, make what use we please of our beasts, as long as we treat them well, for they were made for our convenience ; but God Almighty has given to them life and feeling the same as he has to us ; and we make him angry with us whenever we use them ill.

“ I often think, grandpapa, that it is very strange such large creatures as these,” said Arthur, patting Plover, who now walked quietly by the side

of his master, "should suffer us to get upon their backs, and manage them as we please. They are much stronger than we are; and I wonder they do not drive us away, and not carry us, and refuse to draw our coachés and do every thing we like."

Mr. Mansfield. It would be astonishing, Arthur, if we did not consider that our reason gives us a great advantage over all brutes. Some of them, it is true, are much larger, some much stronger, and others much swifter than we; but by means of our understanding we can conquer the strongest, and tame the fiercest of them.

Charles. How can we tame them, pray, sir?

Mr. Mansfield. By methods which they cannot resist. Plover is stronger than you, but a boy of your size who understands riding would be able to manage him. He would pull the bridle on this side, or on that, according as he wished him to turn; and as he pulled, the bit would hurt the horse's mouth just enough to make him willing to go where he was wanted: therefore, by our knowing how to manage a bit and a bridle, we are more than a match for a horse in spite of his great strength.

Arthur. I understand you now, grandpapa. And I have something to tell you. As we were taking a walk a little while ago, a dog came

barking and snapping, and I thought he was going to bite me; but my mamma called out, "Don't be frightened, Arthur; pick up a stone to throw at the dog, and it will send him away." So I did, and to be sure he slunk off at once. Now was not it my reason that made me conquer the dog, though the dog could bite harder than myself?

Mr. Mansfield. Exactly so. You see, then, that although our bodies are naturally weak and helpless, yet by our reason we are furnished with the means of strength and defence. So God has ordained; and therefore, though he will not suffer us to be cruel to any of his creatures, yet, as our

Bible tells us, he said at the beginning of the world, that the fear and dread of man should be for ever upon all animals.

As Mr. Mansfield finished these words, they reached the stable yard, and Ralph came forward to unharness the pony.

“Plover must be shod to-morrow, sir,” said he, as he looked at one of his hinder feet.

“Is not it cruel, grandpapa,” asked Charles, “to drive nails into the horse’s feet?”

Mr. Mansfield. No, my dear, it is not. The nails only go into the hoofs, which are very hard, and have not any feeling; but if we did not put on these iron shoes, the hoofs, hard as

they are, would soon be battered to pieces when they travel over rough and gravelled ground.

Arthur. Dead horses are of no use; are they, sir?

Mr. Mansfield. Their flesh is given to dogs; but the skin, when converted into leather, is used for making harness and some other things.

CHAPTER VIII.

*A Visit to the Windmill.*

“Do you know, my dear,” said Mrs. Mansfield to her husband, when they were sitting at tea, “the miller has forgotten to send home the flour he promised to let us have last week; and Sarah has just told me we have not enough in the house to bake to-morrow! So what must we do? Can you spare one of the men to go over and inquire about it?”

“I am afraid, my dear,” said Mr.

Mansfield, "they are all busy at present; but when Ralph comes in he may go of the errand."

"It has just occurred to me," rejoined Mrs. Mansfield, "that if you are disposed for another walk this fine evening, you might go yourself and take the children with you; and it will be a nice treat to them, for I know they have never seen a mill."

"Ah, do go, grandpapa; will you, grandpapa? it will be so very delightful!" said both the boys at the same instant.

"Well, bring me my hat then," said their indulgent grandfather. "I did not intend to stir again to-night; but if it will give you pleasure, my dear boys——"

"Thank you, sir! thank you, sir!" cried Charles, running for the hat.

"I hope you won't be tired though," said Arthur. "You shall rest upon my shoulder all the way; and do not be afraid of leaning all your weight, for I shall be able to bear it very well."

"You shall have my shoulder to rest upon too," exclaimed Charles: "So I dare say, grandpapa, you will not be tired."

"Indeed," replied Mr. Mansfield, putting one hand upon the shoulder of each, as he rose from the chair, "with two such kind little supporters, I shall not be easily fatigued."

As they walked, Charles expressed his joy that they were going to see the inside of a mill, which was what

he had long wished to do. "And, pray," inquired he, "what is it like?"

Mr. Mansfield. That you will see when you get to it: in the mean time, Arthur, examine this wheat. I showed you barley and rye in the morning.

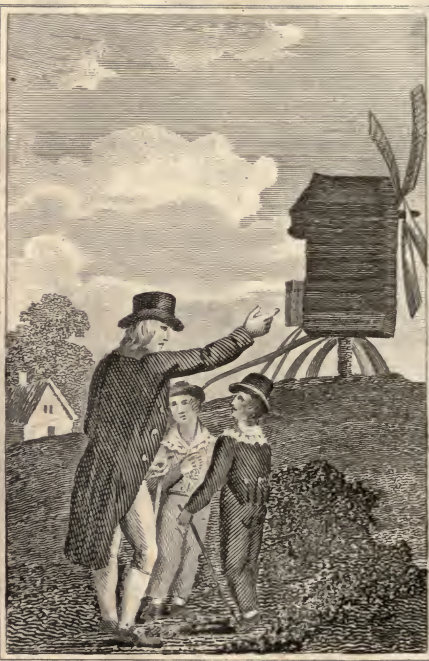
"There is no beard to this," said Arthur.

Mr. Mansfield. No; and the ear is heavier and larger. Gather one, and count the number of grains it contains.

Charles pulled violently, and drew up a root that had seven stalks growing from it.

"Hold, you wasteful little fellow!" cried his grandpapa. "I did not tell you to root up my field at one stroke. Let me see, however. Observe what a wonderful increase here is. These





The Mill.

London Published by W. Darton Jun. Oct. 1797.

seven stalks have all sprung from one single grain, and each ear contains; perhaps, twenty grains; which gives us in all a hundred and forty grains instead of one."

Arthur. That is astonishing, indeed! So there always grows a hundred and forty times as much wheat as is sown?

Mr. Mansfield. No, no, I did not say that. In this instance it is so; and sometimes it may even happen to produce more; but a great deal of seed rots in the ground, without ever growing at all: of what does come up, some is spoilt before it is ripe, and the ears that come to perfection do not all yield so well as these. I believe, therefore, that taking the kingdom through-

out, we only gather about eight times the quantity we sow.

Arthur. How long is wheat growing, pray, sir?

Mr. Mansfield. Nine or ten months generally. No sooner is the harvest of one year got in, than we begin to prepare for that of the ensuing year. We plough the land, and sow it again immediately. Some seed, indeed, is not sown before the spring, but that never produces quite such good crops.

Charles. What is the use of ploughing, grandpapa?

Mr. Mansfield. To break up the earth, which would otherwise get so hard that no corn could grow in it. When a field has been ploughed, a

man walks over it, and scatters the seed all over the field. Then it is raked in by an instrument full of great iron teeth, called a harrow. Care must afterwards be taken to keep it free from weeds, but besides that nothing more can be done. It is left for the rain to water, and the sun to ripen it.

Charles. And when it is quite ripe, then the harvest comes, does it not, sir?

Mr. Mansfield. Yes. Then the reapers go into the field, and cut down the corn with their sickles. They tie it up in bundles, which are called sheaves, when it is carried into barns, and thrashed out for use.

As they were conversing in this manner they arrived at the mill; and when Mr. Mansfield had given his

orders, he asked leave to lead his grandchildren over it. He then explained to them, how the sails, being turned round by the wind, were the occasion of turning different wheels in the inside of the building. He next pointed out to them two large flat stones, shut up in a kind of box. "You may see," said he, "that all the corn is made to pass between these stones. The understone is fixed ; but the upper one turns round, and presses so heavily upon it, as to bruise and grind the corn to powder."

"I understand you, grandpapa," returned Charles. "And is that all that is done here?"

Mr. Mansfield. Not all, Charles ; for the corn, though ground into meal,

wants sifting. To do that, there is a contrivance called a boulding engine, and you may look at it if you step this way.

Mr. Mansfield then opened a little door in the large wooden box, or bin, that contained the engine; when a quantity of fine flour flew out into their faces, and powdered them all over. The boulder was made of framework, five or six feet long, round which a canvas was tightly strained. “Now,” said Mr. Mansfield, “the meal is put into this boulding machine, which turns round, you see, very fast when the mill is at work. The quickness of its motion causes the fine flour to fly off through the canvas; but the coarse and husky part, which

is bran, not being able to do that, falls to the bottom by itself. The use of shutting it up in this box, is to prevent the flour from being scattered over the mill."

The Bensons and their grandfather remained at the mill till they had thoroughly examined every part of it. They received much pleasure from seeing the different wheels and contrivances, and were diverted to find, when they came away, that they were so covered with flour as to look almost as white as millers.

As they were returning home, Arthur observed, that having first seen the wheat growing, and afterwards ground, they only wanted now to know how flour was made into bread, to

understand the whole process from beginning to end.

Mr. Mansfield replied, that he could easily explain that. The flour was mixed with a proper quantity of water, and a little yeast put in to make it rise. "This," said he, "is well kneaded together, and then it is put into an oven and baked."

"But what is yeast?" inquired Charles.

Mr. Mansfield. A scum that rises on the top of new beer.

Arthur. Have not I, sir, seen to-day, some of all the different kinds of corn that grow here?

Mr. Mansfield. I do not recollect our having met with oats. They do not grow in one compact ear like the

rest, for every grain has a separate little foot-stalk to itself. In this part of the country they are chiefly given to horses; but in Scotland, and the north of England, oatmeal cakes are frequently eaten instead of bread.

“And now,” continued he, “I am not sorry to find myself near home. You, Arthur, may likewise be glad to rest yourself; for you have been stumping about almost all day.”

The boys declared they were not at all tired, and thanked their grandpapa for the pleasure he had procured them.

CHAPTER IX.

Poultry.

“GRANDMAMMA, pray where are you going?” asked Charles one morning, on seeing his grandmother walk out at the garden door.

“To feed my chickens, my love,” returned she.

“Then I will go with you, if I may,” said Charles. “And so will I,” said Arthur: and he threw down his peg-top in a corner.

“My speckled hen,” said Mrs. Mansfield, “came off her nest, yesterday, with a fine brood of chickens.”

Arthur. That is the one, is not it, ma'am, that has been sitting so close ever since we came?

Grandmamma. Yes, and for a fortnight before, which makes in all three weeks; the time hens always sit on their eggs.

Charles. I think they must be tired of keeping still so long.

Grandmamma. I believe, Charles, *you* would be tired of such confinement; but birds do not seem to mind it at all. Though so active at other times; when they have laid their eggs, they are quite contented to sit still till the young ones are hatched.

Arthur. Do all birds sit for three weeks, grandmamma?

Grandmamma. No: ducks and geese sit for a month; and pigeons and smaller birds for about a fortnight. Now you may give them some of these grits, and then you will have the pleasure of seeing them peck.

Charles. Let me have a handful, if you please. Chick, chick, chick, chick! come here, poor chickey, and I will give you something to eat. Dear grandmamma! they will not let me catch them; and look at the old hen, she is almost ready to fly at me.

Grandmamma. She is afraid you are going to hurt her chickens, when she sees you run after them. Hens are often very fierce, if any one offers to meddle with their young ones.

Charles. Well then, poor things! I will not take you up in my hand, but I will give you your food on the ground. How pretty they look! They are the colour of my canary bird.

Arthur. I see the old hen does not eat much herself. She only pecks about the grits, to show them to her chickens.

Grandmamma. She is a very good mother; so we will give her some barley. That is the best food for the old ones.

Arthur. See, Charles, how oddly they drink! They turn up their heads whenever they swallow.

Grandmamma. By that means they let the water trickle down their throats.





The Poultry Yard.

London Published by W. Johnston Junr at 125.

Arthur. Then why do not we do so when we drink?

Grandmamma. Because our throats are not formed the same as birds'; for we are provided with a muscle, which carries down the liquor by its motion.

Charles. How the pretty creatures creep under their mother's wings! and she puffs her feathers out, and makes herself as large as she can to cover them all.

Grandmamma. You see how Providence has provided for the welfare of all his creatures. Whilst they are too young to take care of themselves, he gives to the parent a strong affection towards them, and wisdom sufficient to bring them up. The mother,

though generally timorous, and easily frightened, to preserve her young ones will boldly turn round and face almost any danger. You observed that the hen forgot her own hunger, when she was teaching the little chickens to peck; now she covers them with her wings to keep them from the cold, which, as they are not completely fledged, would probably kill them if it were not for her care.

Charles. And what will she do when these little things are grown as big as she is?

Grandmamma. Long before that time she will have cast them off. Brutes never care for their young when they are able to shift for themselves.

Arthur. That is very different

from us. I do not think my mamma will cast us off as long as she lives.

Grandmamma. I do not think she will. And I hope, my dear boys, that in return you will never neglect *her*. A chicken, you see, could not be reared unless the hen took care of it; but a child requires constant attention for many years; and even when grown up, the fondness of the parents still continues. Surely, then, nothing can excuse ingratitude and undutifulness towards them.

Arthur. No, grandmamma: so for the future I will always mind what my papa and mamma say to me; and I will try never to do any thing that I think they won't like.

Grandmamma. That is a very good resolution, and I hope you will keep to it.—Well, Charles, what do you say to the pigeons? They are pretty birds, are they not?

Charles. Indeed, ma'am, they are. I was looking at them falling head over heels, when up in the air.

Grandmamma. Those are called tumblers, that fly in that way. There are many kinds of pigeons. The white ones out there, with tails that stand up somewhat like hens', are called fan-tails.

Arthur. What must we feed the pigeons with?

Grandmamma. You may give them a few tares, if you like; but here we

have no occasion to supply them with much food, for they come to the barn doors, and pick up the corn that is scattered about.

Charles. Are all those one brood, that sit together on the top of that cart-house?

Grandmamma. No. Pigeons never lay more than two eggs at one time; and the pair that are hatched commonly continue mates to one another all their lives.

Charles. Now let us look at the ducks and geese, if you please. The pond is nearly covered with them, I see.

Arthur. How very small some of them are! I should have thought that they were too young to be able to swim.

Grandmamma. Oh, they take to the water as soon as they leave the egg-shell. They are web-footed, and that enables them to swim.

Charles. What is being web-footed, ma'am?

Grandmamma. Having a skin to fill up all the space between the toes. When they swim, they paddle, or strike with their broad feet against the water; which gives them motion onwards.

Arthur. I suppose, grandmamma, you keep poultry for the sake of eating them!

Grandmamma. You are right. But do you know what is done with the feathers?

Charles. No.

Arthur. I do, ma'am. Beds and pillows are stuffed with them.

Grandmamma. And what use is made of the long quill feathers, that grow in the goose's wing?

Arthur. I never have been told.

Grandmamma. The quill part, by being cut into shape, is converted into pens for writing.

Charles. Do only geese furnish pens?

Grandmamma. Some people write with crow-quills: but they are too small for a bold hand; so that they are very little used. The quills of the turkey are too hard; and those of ducks and chickens, on the contrary,

are as much too soft. Swan quills, however, make excellent pens ; but they are too scarce to be in general use.

CHAPTER X.

The Deer.

IN Mr. Mansfield's neighbourhood resided a Mr. Ashley, a gentleman of large fortune, and of a very obliging disposition. He had heard that Arthur and Charles Benson were at their grandpapa's on a visit, and one day he sent for them to play with his son William, a little boy nearly of their own age. The Bensons went, and William took them into the park, where they amused themselves for some time by the play of trap-ball. The

game was at last suddenly broken off by master Ashley, who threw down the bat upon the ground, exclaiming that his pretty tame fawn was coming in sight, and that he must go and stroke it. The Bensons were rather sorry to be interrupted in their play; but, as they had been early taught, that it was often necessary to give up their own inclinations to the wishes of others, they left off with the utmost good humour. "Look at the pretty creature!" said William Ashley, caressing the fawn. "I wish I had a bit of bread here: it would eat it out of my hand."

"I have found a piece of biscuit in the corner of my pocket," said Charles. "Here it is. I will feed it, if you please."

“How old is he?” inquired Arthur.

“Six weeks, or two months, I do not recollect which,” replied William. “But see, here comes the mother! I thought she could not be far off, for does never desert their young ones until the end of the summer.”

The little party was still admiring the fawn, when Mr. Ashley came, and told them that dinner was almost ready.

“We will come, papa,” said William, “as soon as we have done counting the spots upon my little fawn’s back.”

“Pray,” inquired Charles, “are all deer spotted?”

Mr. Ashley. No: their colour is various. Some are of a reddish cast, some of a deep brown, some white, and others spotted like these. Observe the herd that are feeding under those trees, and you will see a great difference amongst them.

“And those, sir,” said Arthur, “have all fine branching horns.”

“They are stags,” returned Mr. Ashley. “The does are the females, and never have any horns. But perhaps you did not know that even stags are without, for a part of every year?”

Arthur. Indeed, sir, I did not, and shall be obliged to you if you will tell me about it.

Mr. Ashley. I will readily. Towards the latter end of February, stags shed their horns, and soon after fresh ones begin to grow. These are at first very tender; and the flies, when they are in that state, are often extremely troublesome to the poor animals. Whilst the horns are off, they separate from each other, and endeavour to hide themselves from every other creature, as they are then incapable of making any defence; but in about three months, when the new ones have grown to their full size, they associate together again in large herds.

After these observations, the whole party returned to the house, and entered the dining-parlour, and their conversation was interrupted by the in-

quiries which Mrs. Ashley made, after the health of Mr. and Mrs. Mansfield: but soon after dinner, William renewed the subject, by asking his father, whether he might be permitted the next season to hunt with the stag hounds?

Mr. Ashley replied, that he was much too young; and then turning to Charles, he asked him if it was his wish also to be a sportsman?

“Indeed, sir,” returned Charles, “I don’t thoroughly understand what you mean by a sportsman; and I never wished nor even thought about it.”

“Oh, a sportsman,” said William, “is a man who is fond of hunting and shooting, and other field sports; and if you knew what they were, I am

sure you would like them, for I think they must be the greatest pleasures of life."

"In what way do they hunt?" inquired Arthur.

William. Why, a stag is turned out into the country, and then, fly where he will, a whole pack of dogs follow him in full cry; and a number of gentlemen, mounted on fine horses, gallop after with the greatest possible speed: and they don't mind what they come to; for they leap over gates, and hedges, and ditches, and ride down hills that are almost as steep as precipices; and at last, when the stag can run no further, he is caught by the dogs, who kill him; but sometimes

his life is saved, that he may be hunted again another day.

“What a cruel diversion!” exclaimed Arthur, shocked at the thought of what the stag must suffer. “I am sure I could never take pleasure in tormenting a poor animal in that way.”

“We huntsmen do not think of the *poor animals*,” returned Mr. Ashley.

“Perhaps not, my dear,” said his wife; “but your want of thought will not prevent them from feeling pain and terror; and I must own, I am always surprised when men of humanity join in such barbarous sports.”

“Do you hunt any thing besides deer?” asked Charles.

Mr. Ashley. Yes, my dear, foxes and hares; the former with fox-hounds, and the latter with harriers.

Arthur. Pray, sir, are deer ever wild in this country?

Mr. Ashley. Not the kind that we have in our parks, which are fallow deer; but there is another species, properly called stags, somewhat larger, differing in a few particulars from those that are wild in our forests. I do not mean that every body has a right to take them; for they are accounted the property of the king.

William. I forget, papa, where you told me that fallow deer were first brought from.

Mr. Ashley. It is said, they came originally from Bengal: but they were

brought here from Norway by King James the first; and England is now more famous for venison than any other country in the world.

Charles. Is any use made of the skins, pray, sir?

Mr. Ashley. Yes: the skin both of the buck and doe makes the soft thick leather, of which gentlemen's riding breeches and gloves are made. The horns are very hard and solid, and make excellent handles for knives and other utensils. They likewise contain a salt, called salt of hartshorn, from which is extracted spirit of hartshorn.

Mrs. Ashley. How should you like to go to Lapland, and ride over the snow in a sledge drawn by rein deer?

Charles. By rein deer, ma'am? What, have deer strength enough to draw carriages?

Mrs. Ashley. The rein deer, my love, is a very extraordinary creature. It inhabits Lapland, and other cold countries, and answers to the inhabitants the purpose of most of the animals we have among us. It serves them instead of a horse, and draws their sledges with amazing swiftness over the frozen country. It supplies them too with milk and cheese, instead of the cow; and answers the purpose of our sheep, in furnishing them with warm covering.

Providence, who has thus formed the rein deer capable of supplying the numerous wants of man, has pro-

vided with wonderful care for its support. That dreary country, where no grass will grow, and not any herb which we are accustomed to see, is nevertheless covered all over with a species of white moss, which serves as food for it. This is its only pasture; and it gets at it in winter, by scratching away the snow with its hinder legs.

Arthur. Is the rein deer good to eat, pray, ma'am?

Mr. Ashley. It is. So, when it has lived about sixteen years, the Laplander generally kills him for the sake of his flesh and his skin.

CHAPTER XI.

The Pheasantry.

MR. ASHLEY'S pleasure-grounds were very extensive ; and in one corner of the park he had inclosed four or five acres of land for keeping rare and curious birds.

Early in the afternoon, he proposed to his young visitors to take a walk to the pheasantry, as it was called ; an offer which they gladly accepted. They entered the inclosure by going through a pretty cottage, where an old man lived who had the care of the birds.

The cottage was deserted ; but outside the back door they found Maddox asleep in a chair, and his little grand-daughter Peggy hard at work by his side.

Peggy rose, and curtsied in a very pretty manner. Then having roused the old man, by telling him that 'squire Ashley was come, she sat down again to her needle. But master William, who was very fond of her, begged she would leave her work while they stayed, and look after the birds with them. On a grass plot close to the cottage there were three or four hens under baskets ; and they had each a little brood belonging to them, which the Bensons mistook for bantams. But Peggy said they were young

pheasants ; their eggs they often set under hens, as they made the best mothers of any fowl.

“ Are these *all* we are to see ? ” inquired Arthur.

“ No, sir,” replied Peggy ; “ we have many that are full grown ; only they are now scattered about, and hid among the bushes. I’ll call them.”

She then fetched out a pan with some of their food, which she scattered over the grass, calling at the same time in a particular manner. Presently several pheasants came from their hiding-places. They were rather shy at first ; but by degrees they ventured nearer, and at last began to eat the food that was thrown to them.

The boys admired their beauty. The plumage of some was of a fine gold colour, variegated with streaks of purple and green. These they learnt were called gold pheasants. The silver pheasants were very handsome, although not quite so showy. They were of a clear white, streaked likewise with purple on the neck and breast. The common pheasant was not equal in beauty to these; but it had notwithstanding a great variety of colours, and was remarkably brilliant.

“What do you feed them with?” asked Charles.

“Ants’ eggs and curds are most proper for them,” said Peggy: “but they will eat oats and barley; and

they pick up wood-lice, and earwigs, and other insects.

A loud squalling now diverted the attention of the little party to another object. They looked up, and saw it proceeded from a peacock, which was perched on the top of a high tree.

Charles inquired if any thing was the matter with him; he was answered that they always made such noise. A little further in the woods they found another peacock. His beautiful long tail did not trail after him in the usual way, for he had spread it, so as to make the feathers stand straight out from his body; and the eyes, or large spots in the ends of the feathers, being raised one above the other, had a very pretty effect. In this state he marched

about with a proud air, and turned himself round and round, as if to exhibit his gaudy appearance to every body present.

Arthur observed another bird with a fine neck and head like the peacock, but without his beautiful tail. In answer to his inquiries, Mr. Ashley told him that it was a pea-hen, and added, that, with very few exceptions, the females, throughout the feathered race, were greatly inferior in beauty to the males.

The party now returned to the house, and Arthur, who liked to know to what purpose every thing was applied, asked Mr. Ashley, what was the use of the fine birds they had seen?

“ They are merely kept as curiosi-

ties," answered that gentleman. "Now and then we kill a young pea-fowl, to eat as a delicacy; but my chief motive in keeping them is, that I may have the pleasure of showing them to my friends."

"Pheasants are eaten sometimes, I know," said Charles.

"Yes," said William; "but not gold and silver pheasants. The common ones that fly about wild, are killed in the shooting season by the sportsmen, the same as partridges and other game."

Charles. What do you mean by game?

Mr. Ashley. Game denotes such kind of birds, or beasts, as are taken or killed by fowling and hunting.

They were now arrived at the house, and Mr. Ashley left them; but the boys, at the request of Arthur, resumed their game of trapball.

CHAPTER XII.

The Story of Old Maddox.

THE next morning at breakfast, the two boys entertained their grandpapa and grandmamma with a full account of what they had seen on the preceding day; and both dwelt with particular pleasure on the beauty of the pheasants.

“Did you take notice of Harry Maddox, the old man who has the care of them?” inquired Mr. Mansfield.

The children replied, that he was

for some time talking with Mr. Ashley; but that he took no notice of them, and that they had observed nothing particular about him.

“That, man,” said Mr. Mansfield, “shabby and mean as he now appears, was once in possession of considerable property. It was his idleness alone that reduced him to poverty.”

“How so, grandpapa?” inquired Charles. “Pray tell us about him.”

“I was going to do so,” returned Mr. Mansfield, “in the hope that the history of his misfortunes might be a lesson to you, not to fall into the fault that has occasioned his ruin.

“Maddox’s father rented a capital farm, a few miles from this village. Harry was a school-fellow of mine, so

that in his childhood I saw a great deal of him. He had some good qualities. He always spoke the truth, and I don't recollect that he ever did any thing spiteful, or injured another purposely. His great fault was a habit of constant idleness. At play-time, when the rest of the boys were amusing themselves at their different sports, Maddox might always be found sitting on the stump of an old tree, that once overshadowed the playground; and all his employment was to scratch up the earth with a stick. This was so constantly the case, that the stump was called by the boys *Maddox's seat*; and I have been told that it still goes by the same name; though, most likely, the cir-

cumstance that gave rise to it has long been forgotten. You may suppose that in school hours Harry did not gain much credit. He was oftener in disgrace than any boy amongst us. He stood near the bottom of the lowest class, and I do not know that he ever made his way much higher. Indeed, how should he? for all the time that he ought to have spent in learning his lessons, he passed in merely holding the book in his hand, or twisting the corners of the leaves."

Charles. But I should have thought he would have been punished if he could not say his lesson; and he would not like that, I suppose.

Mr. Mansfield. Perhaps he did not like punishment; but he liked the

trouble of avoiding it still less. Indeed, after a smart caning, he would sometimes sit down to his book, and learn as much in half an hour as most of us could in a whole one. His being able to do so, as our good master used to say, made him so much the more inexcusable. "If, Maddox, you were dull by nature, and could not learn," I remember his telling him one day, when the boy was crying, and begging not to be flogged, "I should pity you; and, as long as you did your best, should never be angry: but you have really a good understanding, and this idleness is unpardonable, and you need not hope to escape correction." Correction, however, and encouragement, were equally thrown

away upon Maddox ; and he left school at fifteen, after having passed a miserable time, scolded by the masters and derided by the boys.

Arthur. What became of him then, grandpapa ?

Mr. Mansfield. His father took him home, intending to bring him up to farming : but he found he could make nothing of him ; so he put him apprentice to a brewer in a good way of business.

However, Harry still continued idle, and learned nothing, so that when he was out of his time, his master was very glad to get rid of so useless a hand, and declared he would have nothing further to say to him ; notwithstanding he was then in want of a

partner, and old Mr. Maddox, the father, had offered to advance a considerable sum, if he would give him a share of the business.

Some time after this, he married ; and his father then set him up in a brewery by himself, and gave him all that was necessary to begin trade with.

His success, however, was just what might have been expected. He did not like to give himself trouble ; and his beer was so bad, that nobody would buy it. In short, he lost all his customers, and ran into debt ; so that every thing he had was taken away to pay his creditors.

The kind father once more received his son, with his wife and family, into his own house ; and instead of being

angry, he tried to console him for his misfortunes, by telling him, that as long as he had a shilling in the world he should share it with him; and that, by industry and frugality, they might yet do very well. One would have thought that such great kindness, and the distresses he had brought upon himself, would have had some effect on the mind of young Maddox; and indeed they had: for a short time, he went on pretty well, but he soon relapsed into his former habits of indolence. As long, however, as his father lived, he did not know what it was to want. It is true, he was accustomed to lie in bed till noon, and then to doze in an arm chair the greatest part of the day. But his fa-

ther was always up before the dawn, and continued to attend to the concerns of his farm till after the sun was set; for he found that much additional industry was required, to enable him to support such a large increase to his household. Harry at length lost his excellent parent, and had the misfortune, not long after, to bury his wife. •

Charles. Ah, poor Maddox! How badly off he must have been then, grandpapa!

Mr. Mansfield. He was, indeed, my dear. All good management was at an end, both in the house and in the fields. He took no care of his children himself, nor did he provide any body to look after them for him. His

sons, in consequence of this neglect, grew up very wild young men. They were always in company with the most worthless fellows in the neighbourhood; and at last one of them ran away to sea, and never was heard of more. The youngest girl fell into an ill state of health, and perished from want of care and nursing. The eldest daughter, mother to the little Peggy whom you saw at the cottage, was the only one of the children that grew up to be a comfort to herself, or to her family. She married at a very early age, but, unfortunately for Peggy, died some time ago.

Arthur. So poor Peggy has no mother! What a sad thing for her!

Mr. Mansfield. She has no father

neither, my dear: but we will talk more of her by and by, if I have not tired you with my long story.

Charles. Oh, you need not be afraid of tiring us, grandpapa. We like to hear you very much, and I want to know how Maddox went on with his farm.

Mr. Mansfield. Why, he left his farm to take care of itself; and when the men went to him for directions, he used to tell them to begone about their business, and do as they would, for he should not trouble himself about the matter. So perhaps one wanted to sow beans, when another wanted to sow corn; and then they would get into a quarrel, and not work at all. By this means, the seed was never put into his fields till after it had begun to

grow up in all the country round: and as he took no care to keep his land clean, it was always choked with weeds; and, in all the time he was a farmer, he had not a single good crop. His fences too were left in the most ruinous state, and his neighbour's cattle used to get into his fields through the gaps in the hedges, and do much mischief among his corn and hay. Then sometimes his own beasts trespassed in the same manner upon the grounds of other people, and he was obliged to pay for the damage they did; and if they were sent to the pound, it was some expense to him to redeem them.

Arthur. What do you mean, sir, by saying they were sent to the pound?

Mr. Mansfield. A pound is a small spot inclosed with high rails, in which cattle that go astray may be confined; and the person whose office it is to keep the pound claims a certain fee when they are sent for by the owner.

Maddox's farm belonged to Mr. Ashley; and when the lease was out, his landlord refused to grant him another. From the time of the old man's death, the rents had been very irregularly paid; and besides, Mr. Ashley did not choose to let any part of his estate to a man who suffered it to go to ruin.

Charles. - Indeed, I think he was in the right. I should not like to have my fields, that might be kept in nice order, like yours, grandpapa, spoiled.

from want of proper care. But what became of Maddox, then?

Mr. Mansfield. He hired a wretched cottage, and lived for some time upon the little money he had by him. When that was gone, he was actually reduced to beggary. He had scarcely a rag to cover him, and could barely get food to keep him alive. I happened to hear of his miserable situation, and I called on Mr. Ashley, to consult about what could be done for him.

Arthur. And what did Mr. Ashley say?

Mr. Mansfield. He said he was sorry to hear of his distress; and would be glad to relieve him, if it were in his power. "But," he added, "what can I do? It is not proper to maintain a

strong, hearty man, like Maddox, in idleness. He learned so little when he was young, that I know he can hardly read or write ; therefore, I cannot make him my steward. If I hire him as a labourer, he will not do a day's work in the year ; and I am sure, for the pains he would take, my deer might all be lost, or stolen, if I made him deer-keeper." Soon after this conversation, however, Mr. Ashley inclosed a part of his park, for keeping pheasants, and then he resolved to intrust the care of them to Harry Maddox, and ordered that he should take little Peggy to live with him ; for the poor girl just before had had the misfortune to lose both her parents.

Charles. Oh, you promised just now to tell us something about Peggy.

Mr. Mansfield. I have only to say, that her character is the very reverse of her grandfather's. She is a notable, active girl, and does a wonderful deal for her age. As Mr. Maddox still continues the same, the birds would be sadly neglected, if it were not for her care. Mr. Ashley puts her to school, where she learns to work: and I believe she keeps both her own and the old man's clothes in very tolerable order. The cottage, too, is neat and clean, though there is no one to do any thing but herself.

"I thought she was a nice girl," said Charles. "She was at work, you

know, Arthur, yesterday afternoon, when we went there."

"Yes," replied Arthur, "and the old man was fast asleep. What a contrast between them!"

"You see," rejoined Mr. Mansfield, "though she is but a child, in how respectable a light her industry makes her appear. She acquires the esteem of all who know her, and she has the satisfaction of feeling that she does not live in vain. As for poor old Maddox, I don't know from what source his satisfactions can arise. The review of his past life can afford him no comfort; and if he looks forward to the close of his present existence, he must be shocked at the account to which he will then be called, for du-

ties neglected, talents misemployed, and a family ruined, through his want of care.

Arthur. Well, I have often been told that I ought to be a good boy, and mind my lessons; but I did not know before, that idleness could lead to so *much* mischief. I always thought that, when I was a man, I should attend to my business as a matter of course.

Mr. Mansfield. Ah, my dear child, you are much mistaken, if you suppose that you will be able to get the better of your faults, only by growing older. Now is the time for you to acquire good habits of all sorts; and if you neglect to do so, depend upon it, that when you become a man, you will find the task only rendered a great

deal more difficult, from having been so long delayed.

“Very true, my dear,” said Mrs. Mansfield. “Besides, little folks should consider, that it is not their future advantage alone which should lead them to take pains with their studies—it is one of the absolute duties of their infant state. God Almighty did not mean that any of us should be idle at any time; and a child who is idle when he ought to be at his book, as much transgresses the will of God, as a man who neglects his trade, or a woman who takes no care of her family.”

“I think,” said Mr. Mansfield, starting up as he looked at his watch, “that whilst I have been prating

away in favour of industry, I seem to have forgotten that I have a thousand concerns to attend to. But I will no longer act in a way so contrary to my precepts. And so good morning to you. I am off till dinner-time."





A pleasant Ride?

Chap. XIII.

CHAPTER XIII.

A pleasant Ride.

THE story of Maddox had a very good effect upon the minds of the young Bensons. They immediately brought out their books, and spent some time in reading and learning their lessons. Afterwards Mrs. Mansfield heard them the catechism, and explained to them some parts of it which they did not clearly understand.

When Mr. Mansfield came in to dinner, he said that he should be obliged in the afternoon to go upon

business to a place about ten miles off; and he asked his wife, if she would like to accompany him in their one-horse chaise.

“Thank you, my dear,” returned Mrs. Mansfield; “but it would give me more pleasure if you would take the boys. I know they would enjoy a ride, and they have been very good this morning.”

“Have they so?” said the obliging grandpapa. “Why then, if you will give up your place, I will take them very willingly. I like the company of good children.”

The party thus settled, dinner was quickly dispatched; the chaise stood ready at the door, and the boys jumped into it with a look of pleasure on their

countenances that can more easily be fancied than described.

Part of the road they were to travel lay through a large forest. Here they had an opportunity of seeing a variety of trees; and Mr. Mansfield answered with the greatest readiness every question they put to him concerning them.

“What tree is that, grandpapa?” inquired Charles, pointing to one that grew near the road; “the one, I mean, that has such an amazing large trunk, and the branches of it spread so wide all round?”

Mr. Mansfield. It is an oak, my dear; the most valuable timber tree that grows.

Arthur. What are timber trees?

Mr. Mansfield. Trees that are used

in building houses and ships; they are principally oaks, elms, and ash-trees.

Arthur. And you say that the oak is the most valuable of them all; pray what makes it so?

Mr. Mansfield. The wood is very hard, and tough; not apt to splinter, nor liable to be eaten by worms; and as it remains sound for a great while when under water, it answers very well for building ships, or for piles, or bridges; in short, for any thing that requires strength and durability.

They now came to a part of the forest where many large oaks had been recently felled. Leafless, and stript of all, but the stumps of the larger branches, they lay at length upon the

ground, and made a striking contrast to the green and flourishing trees that grew around.

Charles inquired, what made them look so white? Mr. Mansfield replied, that they had been stript of their bark, or outer skin, which was used by the tanner, in the process of manufacturing leather. "Indeed," added he, "every part of the oak may be employed in tanning; the sawdust, the leaves, all have a binding quality, that, in process of time, will harden the raw hide of beasts into leather."

"Acorns grow upon oaks, don't they, sir?" said Charles.

"To be sure they do," answered Arthur. "I have seen them in abun-

dance since we have been riding. Are they good to eat, grandpapa?"

Mr. Mansfield. You would find them bitter and disagreeable, but pigs and deer fatten upon them. Did you ever take notice of the cups?

As he said this, he broke off a bough from a tree which they were passing, and gave it to the boys to examine.

"Would you suppose," asked he, "that these large oaks, that cover so much ground, and form the glory of the forest, all sprung from acorns no larger than these?"

"It is very wonderful," said Arthur. "Pray, sir, are they long growing?"

Mr. Mansfield. An oak seldom comes to perfection in less than two

hundred years, and they will sometimes live four or five hundred. Our English oaks are particularly esteemed, but they are much fewer in number than they once were. In ancient times, before there were so many inhabitants, and when cultivation was little attended to, almost the whole island was but one forest. It has been cleared by degrees, however, and converted into corn and pasture land; and we have only now a few forests of any size. In consequence of this, oak timber is much scarcer than it used to be. If you go into old houses, that were built two or three centuries ago, you will see nothing but oaken floors and oaken wainscots. Now the case is altered, and people are obliged to

be contented with wood of a very inferior quality. Deal, for instance, is much used for the purposes I have mentioned.

Charles. Are there any deal trees in this forest, grandpapa?

Mr. Mansfield. There are no such things as deal trees, Charles. It is the wood of the fir, which, when cut up into timber, is called deal. By and by, I will point out to you a plantation of firs, of which there are several different species. They are all ever-greens; that is, they do not lose their leaves in winter. The Scotch fir is the most hardy, and thrives well on the bleak mountains of the north. It may likewise be reckoned the most useful; for it supplies us with the best

deal for making masts of ships, floors, wainscots, tables, boxes, and other things. The trunk and branches afford excellent pitch and tar. The roots, when divided into small splinters, are sometimes burnt by poor people instead of candles. The outer bark is used, as well as that of the oak, in tanning leather; and I have heard that there is a place in Scotland where they make ropes of the inner bark; and that in some of the northern countries of Europe, in times of scarcity, they grind it, and mix it with their flour when they make bread.

Arthur. I see another large tree, grandpapa, but it does not look like the oak.

Mr. Mansfield. 'Tis a beech, a very

useful tree to the cabinet-maker. Its branches, you observe, slope gently downwards, instead of growing straight out, and it is more full of leaf than the oak. That tree on the left is an ash. Its foliage is very light. The wood is much used for making implements of husbandry, particularly hop-poles.

“And *there* is a fine stately tree!” observed Charles; “is it another beech?”

Mr. Mansfield. No, Charles, that is an elm; a timber tree of great value. You may often see them in hedges, and they are frequently planted in rows to make avenues in parks. The inner part of the wood is almost as solid and heavy as iron; and is

therefore much used in mill-work, and to make axle-trees, keels of boats, chairs, and coffins.

“ Pray, pray,” interrupted Arthur, “ look at that tree a little way off, how the leaves flutter with the wind ! They are in constant motion ; but yet it is very calm, and all the other trees are still.”

“ That tree,” replied Mr. Mansfield, “ is called an aspen, or trembling poplar. It is the nature of it to be in that constant agitation, whether the wind is high or not.”

“ What is done with the aspen ? ” inquired Charles.

Mr. Mansfield. The stem is bored for water-pipes, and is made into milk-pails, clogs, and pattens.

The business which Mr. Mansfield had to transact, detained them so long that it grew very dark as they were returning home; and the little boys were surprised, in the midst of the gloom, to see a bright shining speck upon the ground. "What is that, what is that, grandpapa?" they exclaimed at the same instant. "It looks," added Charles, "as if one of the stars had fallen to the earth." "And I see another, and another," said Arthur, laughing: "oh, what can they be?"

"They are glow-worms," replied Mr. Mansfield; "and you may find numbers of them, after dark, at this time of the year."

"They are very pretty," said Ar-

thur. "I should like to see one near. Will you be so kind, sir, as to stop for a moment, and let me get out and fetch one?"

Mr. Mansfield consented, and Arthur jumped out, and presently returned in triumph with his prize. They then saw that the glow-worm was a small insect, something bigger than a wood-louse; and that the brightness proceeded from a part under the tail. The light it gave was strong enough for them to see what time it was by their grandfather's watch, when held close to it.

"I have been trying, grandpapa," said Arthur, after having sat still for some time, with the glow-worm in his hand, "to find what it is that

occasions the light; but I cannot make it out."

"I believe, Arthur," said Mr. Mansfield, smiling, "that this wonderful little insect has puzzled philosophers much wiser than you. I never heard its luminous appearance explained in a very satisfactory manner; and not at all in a way that *you* would understand.

Charles. There is no difficulty in finding out glow-worms, let it be ever so dark.

Mr. Mansfield. Your observation, my dear, brings to my mind a pretty fable I once read about a glow-worm; and the moral of it is, that we ought not to boast of any external advantages we may possess, or despise those who

happen to be without them; since the very things we are proud of, often bring down misfortunes upon us.

Arthur. But what was the fable, grandpapa? In my book they always put the fable first; but you have begun with the moral.

Mr. Mansfield. “A glow-worm, vain of her beauty, began to upbraid a poor humble wood-louse, that lay beside her. ‘Dost not thou admire my splendid tail,’ said she, ‘that sends forth a light almost as glorious as the stars? Insignificant reptile that *thou* art! wonder at thy boldness, in venturing so near to one of my brilliant appearance. What admiration wilt *thou* acquire, or when wilt *thou* become the pride and glory of the night?”

“The wood-louse replied with great humility, Happy in myself, I do not wish to draw the attention of others ; and if I have not thy beauty to boast of, I am at least without thy pride.”

“A nightingale, who was singing in a neighbouring bush, attracted by the light of the glow-worm, flew to the spot where she lay, and seizing the vain insect in her beak, carried it away to feast her family. The wood-louse, concealed in darkness, escaped the enemy’s notice.”

CHAPTER XIV

Bees.

THE next morning, on the little boys getting up, they were surprised at hearing a tinkling sound just under their windows. They were induced, as soon as they were ready, to run down into the garden, to see what was going forward.

Mrs. Mansfield was the person who occasioned the noise, by striking the lid of a tin saucepan with a large key.

“Oh, grandmamma, what are you

about?" exclaimed Arthur, laughing. "I should have taken you for my little sister Kate, amusing herself by making, what she would call, a *pretty noise*."

"I do it, my dear, to prevent the bees from going away," replied Mrs. Mansfield. "Don't you see what swarms are flying about?"

"Yes," returned Arthur. "But what have they to do with the key and the saucepan lid?"

"All these," said Mrs. Mansfield, "are young bees, that have been hatched this summer; and now that they are grown up, the hive is too small to contain them. They therefore have left it; and are going to seek another place for themselves; and



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it is generally supposed that a tinkling noise will keep them from going to a distance ; though, whether it has any effect or not, I cannot pretend to determine."

By this time the bees had settled in a cluster on the branch of a tree, where they all hung together in one great mass. Old Ralph then took an empty hive, and shook them into it, having previously covered his hands and face, that he might not be stung.

"How do bees make honey, grandmamma?" inquired Charles.

Mrs. Mansfield. By means of their long trunks they suck up the sweetness that is in the cups of flowers.

Charles. And is that honey?

Mrs. Mansfield. Not until it has

been further prepared by the bees, who swallow it, and then throw it up again, after having digested it in their stomachs.

Charles. Bees make wax too, do not they?

Mrs. Mansfield. Yes; come to this bed of flowers, and you will see them at work.

“I observe,” said Arthur, after having watched them attentively for some time, “that they every moment stroke their legs over one another; is that of any use?”

Mrs. Mansfield. It is in order to put the yellow dust, which they collect from the flowers, and of which the wax is made, upon their hinder thighs: a few short hairs on them form a

kind of basket, on purpose to receive it. When they have collected as much as they can carry, they fly back to the hive to deposit it there.

Arthur. And what use do they make of it, grandmamma?

Mrs. Mansfield. After having kneaded and properly prepared it, they make it into the honey-comb, or little cells which contain the honey; and when the cells are full, the bees stop them up with a little more wax, to preserve it as food for the winter.

Arthur. Then how do we get it?

Mrs. Mansfield. The hive is held over brimstone, which kills the bees, and then we take out the honey-combs. Some people adopt a method of taking the honey without destroying the bees;

but I do not know whether that is less cruel in the end; for the poor things are then frequently starved in the winter, for want of their proper food.

Arthur. Have not I heard something about a queen-bee?

Mrs. Mansfield. Very probably you have. There is a queen to every hive; and she is larger than the rest. She very seldom comes abroad, and whenever she does, she is attended by a number of her subjects. They are so much attached to her, that, if she dies, they make a mournful humming, and unless another queen be given to them, will at last pine away, and die too.

“How very surprising!” said

Charles. "Who would have thought that such little insects could show so much attachment to each other?"

Mrs. Mansfield. The natural history of the bee is full of wonders, my dear. Besides the queen, there are two different sorts, the drones and the working bees.

The drones seldom leave the hive, and never assist to procure honey. When the time comes for making up their winter stores, they are, therefore, all killed by the working bees as useless members of society. As they are without stings, they are unable to defend themselves. The working bees compose the most numerous body of the state. They have the care of the hive, collect wax and honey from the

flowers, make the wax into combs, feed the young, keep the hive clean, turn out all strangers, and employ themselves in promoting the general good.

Arthur. They are very industrious, indeed, Charles! Do you recollect Dr. Watts's little hymn about the Busy Bee?

Charles. Yes, brother; I was just thinking of it.

Mrs. Mansfield. Repeat it then will you, my love? After the account I have been giving you, we shall attend to it with particular pleasure.

Charles. How doth the little busy bee

Improve each shining hour!

And gather honey all the day

From every opening flower!

How skilfully she builds her cell !
How neat she spreads the wax !
And labours hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes !

In work of labour, or of skill,
I would be busy too ;
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthful play,
Let my first years be past ;
That I may give, for every day,
A good account at last.

CHAPTER XV.

*An Evening Stroll.*

As the weather was remarkably pleasant, Mrs. Mansfield proposed having tea earlier than usual, that they might afterwards have time for a walk ; and the rest of the party approving the scheme, they set off in high spirits, the moment that meal was concluded. Mrs. Mansfield was not a very good walker, but she leaned upon her husband's arm, and enjoyed the fineness of the evening. It

was not their intention to go to any great distance from home; so when they came to a stile, or the stump of a tree, she sat down to rest herself, and take a view of the country; during which time, the little boys amused themselves by running backwards and forwards, and would frequently pick up some flower or curious little pebble, and bring it to their grandpapa, to inquire its name and use. As they were proceeding gently by the side of a large pond, they saw a great number of birds skimming over the surface in all directions. In answer to Arthur's inquiries, Mr. Mansfield replied that they were swallows, and that they were flying about in quest of food.

“What food,” asked Charles, “can they possibly expect to find growing upon the pond?”

“Flies and insects,” answered his grandfather, “are the proper food for swallows; and many of them constantly sport on the water.”

“And swallows,” said Mrs. Mansfield, “are thought to be of great use, by destroying so many millions of them, which would otherwise multiply so fast, as to be quite a nuisance to the world.”

Charles. Can they catch them as they fly?

Mrs. Mansfield. Yes, my dear. Their mouths are made large that they may take in their prey the more easily; and indeed, every part of the

swallow is wonderfully adapted to its nature and manner of living.

Arthur. How do you mean, grand-mamma?

Mrs. Mansfield. As in pursuit of insects it is necessary for them to be almost constantly on the wing, their bodies are very light and small; and the wings being long in proportion, they fly with great ease and swiftness. This is more particularly needful to them, because they are birds of passage; that is, they go to different countries according to the season of the year. They come over here in large flocks about the middle of April; and in October they assemble again in great numbers, and fly across the sea to some warmer climate. They make

their nests with clay, and line them with feathers and soft grass, and build them chiefly a little way down the tops of chimneys, or under the eaves of houses. As they have little occasion to be upon the ground, their legs are short and ill adapted for walking.

“Your observation, my dear,” said Mr. Mansfield, “that swallows are formed in the best manner possible for their habits of life, is perfectly just; but it should not be confined to them. The God of Nature has equally adapted every other kind of bird, and, I may add, every animal, to the state for which he designed it.

Arthur. Has he, indeed, grand-papa! I wish you would tell me about them, then. I should like you should

give me an account of every creature that lives.

Mr. Mansfield. Oh, my dear! I am much too ignorant of Natural History to be able to do that. Indeed, I know very little of it; but the more I read and the more I observe, the greater reason I see to admire the wonderful goodness and wisdom of the Almighty.

At this instant, Charles, who had been running to a little distance, returned with great speed, bringing with him, by the hinder leg, a dead animal he had picked up, rather smaller than a common rat, but broader in proportion to its length.

“What is this, what is this?” asked he.

“A mole,” replied Mrs. Mansfield, who saw it first.

“A mole!” repeated her husband :
“Oh, bring it to us, then. This little animal, Arthur, will serve as an instance of what I was saying; for no creature can be more exactly suited to its mode of life.”

“How, sir?” inquired Arthur.

“In the first place,” returned Mr. Mansfield, “you should be informed that the mole lives almost constantly under ground; as its food consists of worms and little insects that it finds in the earth. It is therefore necessary for it to be able to work its way through the earth; and if you examine it well, you will find it admirably constructed for that purpose.”

“Indeed,” said Arthur, “I see nothing very particular in it.”

Mr. Mansfield. Look at its fore-feet. They are broad, strong, and short; not set straight from the body, but inclining a little sideways. By means of this position, it is enabled, as it burrows its way, to cast off the mould on each side, so as to make for itself a hollow passage in the middle. Their breadth likewise serves the purpose of hands, to form their nests, scoop out the earth, and seize their prey. The form of the body is equally well contrived. The fore part is thick and strong, so that it can dig its way with wonderful quickness, either to pursue its prey or to escape from its enemies; whilst the hinder parts being small and taper, enable it to pass easily through the loose earth that the fore-feet had flung behind.

“It is of a clean black colour,” said Charles; “and the hair is short, thick, and very soft.”

“True,” said Mr. Mansfield. “And the skin is so tough that it would require a sharp knife to cut it. It is not therefore liable to be injured by flints, or other stones that it may meet with in its passage under ground. Now let me see which of you can find its eyes.”

Charles. The eyes, the eyes! grand-papa, this mole must be without eyes!

Arthur. I would find them if I could, but it certainly has none.

Mr. Mansfield parted the hair, and pointed out two very small specks. “The smallness of the eyes,” said he, “is to this animal a peculiar happiness. Had they been larger, they would have

“been liable to frequent injuries, from the mould falling into them; and of what use would they be to him, when destined to pass his whole life where no light could reach him?”

“*Arthur.* But then, sir, how do they see to get their food?”

“*Mr. Mansfield.* They do *not* see it, *Arthur*; they find it out by their smell, which as well as their hearing is very acute: so that, though nearly blind, they are not without the means of providing for their support, and of knowing how to avoid danger. The eye is, therefore, merely given them to let them know that they are out of the way when they see the light. The mole shows great art in skinning worms, which it always does before it eats

them; stripping the skin from end to end, and squeezing out all the contents of the body. During summer they run in search of snails and worms, in the night-time, among the grass; which often makes them the prey of owls. Moles do a good deal of mischief in fields and gardens; because, by running under the earth, they loosen the roots of plants and corn. But yet they are of use, as every thing living is, in the grand system of Nature: their prey would without them so multiply, that they themselves would commit greater mischief than we fear from moles.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Return Home.

THE next day was the day appointed for the young Bensons to return home. They rose earlier than usual, that they might have time to walk round the farm, and take a last look at the objects that had given them so much pleasure. They first went to the poultry-yard, and took with them some tares, to feed a pigeon that was grown so tame as to fly down when he saw them, and perch upon their heads. Their next business was

to take leave of Plover the pony, for whom they had both conceived a great affection; for, after Charles's fright, Mr. Mansfield had given them several lessons in riding, and they had learned to manage him tolerably well, and were exceedingly delighted with the exercise.

They were stroking him, and lamenting that they should have no more rides, when old Ralph came up.

Honest Ralph was much attached to his master, and was disposed to love his grandchildren for his sake; and their constant civility and good humour conspired to make them favourites.

As he had heard what they said, he very obligingly brought out the

saddle and bridle; and, harnessing the pony, told them that breakfast was not yet ready, and that they should have a ride the last morning.

These words "the last morning" brought the tears into Charles's eyes; but as he had a good deal of fortitude, he strove to suppress them, and, mounting Plover, galloped away to a distance, that he might not be seen to cry. Presently after Arthur took his turn, and, as it grew late, they then went in doors.

They found Mr. and Mrs. Mansfield in the parlour, and the post-chaise, in which they were to set off, already at the door. They were therefore obliged to hurry over their breakfast, that they might not keep their

grandfather waiting for them ; for the old gentleman had engaged to accompany his grandsons to London, where he was to remain for a few days. Mrs. Mansfield kissed both the boys over and over again, and charged them to give her love to their papa and mamma, and little sister. She bestowed upon them great commendations for their good conduct and docility during the whole of their stay, and told them that, as they had enjoyed their visit, she hoped they would repeat it at some future opportunity.

Arthur and Charles pressed her hand, and returned her embraces ; but their voices failed when they attempted to thank her for the great kindness she had shown them.

At length the moment of separation came; but before they stepped into the chaise, they went round to shake hands with all the servants, who had assembled about the door, in order to see them set off, and wish them good-bye.

When the carriage drove off, a gloom hung for a short time upon the countenances of the young travellers; but it cleared away by degrees, as their attention was diverted to new objects, and in a short time they entirely recovered their gaiety.

After they had travelled some miles, Mr. Mansfield informed them that they were then upon a new road, which a few years before had been

cut through a steep hill. "You observe," said he, "that we have a high bank on each side of us, so that we seem to be almost buried between the two. The spot where we now are was formerly level with the top of the banks, and made a part of the same field with them; and the old road then went several miles further about, to avoid this hill. But now that the ground has been cut away so as to leave the road on a gentle ascent, coming this way saves time, and is less fatiguing to horses."

"It must have been a work of great labour," said Arthur.

"Certainly," returned Mr. Mansfield; "but it is nothing in comparison to

some works that have been accomplished. What should you think of making canals, or artificial rivers, for forty or fifty miles together, where before was dry land?"

"Is it possible," said Charles, "that that should ever have been done!"

"Undoubtedly, my dear, in several places," observed Mr. Mansfield, "When a number of men, Charles, unite together in the same work, with prudence and industry, it is difficult to say what they *cannot* do."

The travellers did not arrive in London till late in the evening. Arthur and Charles rejoiced to meet again their dear parents and sister,

from whom they had never before separated ; and they felt, that though they might enjoy an occasional excursion, yet for a constancy no place was so happy or desirable as HOME.

THE END.

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